

To the Members of the California State Senate:

I am returning Senate Bill 541 without my signature.

This bill is the result of an unacceptable situation in Humboldt County, where the county was notified of a defect in the voting software but failed to address the problem. This resulted in 197 votes being deleted. Because the Secretary of State (SOS) is not notified when there is a flaw in a voting system, there was no safety net to ensure that voters were not impacted.

The SOS inspects ballot manufacturing facilities before approving them to do business in California. This bill would appropriately include the SOS in a notification of equipment defects during and after this process. However, this bill goes beyond insuring appropriate notification and imposes substantial civil penalties on voting system vendors.

Many of the technical changes in this bill are acceptable, and I look forward to seeing a bill in the future that balances appropriate disclosure, without unnecessarily restricting a company's ability to do business in California.

Therefore I am unable to sign this bill.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger